

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast

June 14th 2013

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

The words below are from the first news story. Choose the group of synonyms (words with similar meaning that best match each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word from the story	Related words
	1) fired	a) avoid not listen
	2) entire	b) extra money reward for hard work
	3) ignore	c) dismissed forced to quit
	4) directive	d) back pay extra payment
	5) bonus	e) administrator manager
	6) executive	f) all total
	7) severance	g) instruction plan

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

board – board of directors. The group of people responsible for making major decisions of a company, college or organization

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Read and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. Who fired the entire board of Alberta Health Services?
2. Why did he fire the entire board?
3. Where was this announcement made?
4. Why could Horne not accept the decision of AHS?
5. What will the dismissed board members not get?
6. Who is (was) the chair of AHS?

Discussion Question

Do you think it is a good idea to give bonuses to staff of a company? When is it a good decision? When is it not?

News story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

riverbank (side of the river)	roaring (loud noise)	erode (to break down)
threaten (could cause damage)	particularly (specifically)	evacuees (people leaving)
voluntarily (without being asked)	advisories (warnings)	arena (stadium)

1. The North Saskatchewan river in Edmonton has a steep _____.
2. The wind and the rain will _____ the cliff, making it dangerous to climb.
3. Last week we had some terrible storms in Alberta and there were tornado _____ on the radio and TV, _____ for south east Edmonton.
4. In the spring when the snow melts the _____ waterfalls in the mountains are amazing to see and hear.
5. My children _____ did the dishes on Father's day.
6. Because the fire was out of control the _____ had to leave the city.
7. My children play hockey in winter and soccer in summer at the local _____.
8. Fires and floods _____ the environment as well as homes and business.

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true** or **false**. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. _____ The river in Fort McMurray is flooding the city.
2. _____ The river water has eroded the gas and phone lines.
3. _____ There were many days of heavy rain so a state of emergency was put into effect.
4. _____ Over 100 people left their homes without being asked.
5. _____ People in some neighbourhoods were warned not to drink their water until it's boiled.
6. _____ People who evacuated their homes have no place to stay.

Discussion Question

Why do you think some people choose to stay in their homes when the police tell them to evacuate? Do you think there is more extreme weather these days? What could be the cause of such extreme weather?

News story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary: Match the words with their definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word	Definition
	1. discontent	a) continue to be
	2. dictator	b) current; in the past few days
	3. remain	c) protest
	4. defiant	d) huge
	5. demonstration	e) unrest
	6. barracks	f) resistance; not willing to change
	7. massive	g) unhappiness
	8. recent	h) strongly enforcing the laws
	9. tension	i) houses for soldiers
	10. crackdown	j) a ruler that takes total control

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

in the face of – despite; doing something against the opposite view

Environmentalists: People who work to protect the natural world from pollution and other threats
Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. Protests have spread across Turkey over _____.	a) discontent with the country's Prime Minister b) discussions with the Prime Minister
2. Protestors say the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been _____.	a) acting like a dictator b) defiant against change
3. The demonstrations began when _____ protest a building plan.	a) people wanted a shopping mall and began to b) environmentalists took to the streets to
4. The government plans to build army barracks and a shopping center _____.	a) in place of a park in central Istanbul b) in a holy place in Istanbul
5. The police cracked down on this protest, which lead to _____.	a) ongoing tensions about the Prime Minister b) massive street protests across Turkey
6. _____ have been arrested and hurt in the recent protests.	a) Thousands of people b) Hundreds of protesters

Discussion Question: Do you think people have to right to protest an issue if they are not happy with a decision?

Language Focus

Identifying verb tenses and their use

Present perfect

- We use this verb tense to describe an action that happened some time in the past (but no definite time is known.)
- We also use this tense if an event began in the past and still continues today.

Forming the present perfect: has/have + past participle

Present perfect in the passive voice

- We use passive voice to focus on the action itself or on the object receiving the action, rather than who is doing it. The subject of the sentence receives the action.
- We use passive voice when the doer of the action is unknown, or not important and when we want to express that the action/event is more important than the actor.

Forming present perfect in passive voice: have/has + been + past participle of the main verb.

Let's look at examples in the readings:

1. "Alberta Health Minister Fred Horne **has fired** the entire board of Alberta Health Services"

The present perfect is used because the action happened some time in the past and is still true today.

2. "Horne said Tuesday that he could not accept the decision of AHS to give the bonuses when there **have been** many cuts to health care."

3. "Roaring floodwaters in Fort McMurray **have eroded** riverbanks, washed away roads and threatened gas and phone lines."

4. "Local waterways, particularly the Hangingstone River, **have been pushed** to dangerously high levels."

In this example we can see the present perfect voice in the passive voice. The passive voice is used because rising water level is important, not what is pushing the water up (which is the rain.)

Listen to the third story this week. Can you hear the two examples of present perfect and one example of present perfect in the passive voice? *Answers are in the appendix.*

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	JUNE 14 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, this is Carla Beynon. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for June 14 th .	0:00
Story 1	Alberta Health Minister Fred Horne has fired the entire board of Alberta Health Services. Horne made the announcement at a news conference in Lethbridge; one day after the board ignored a directive from the provincial government not to give bonuses to AHS executives. Horne said Tuesday that he could not accept the decision of AHS to give the bonuses when there have been many cuts to health care. The dismissed board members, including chair Stephen Lockwood, will not get severance pay.	0:09
Story 2	Roaring floodwaters in Fort McMurray have eroded riverbanks, washed away roads and threatened gas and phone lines. A state of emergency was put into effect after days of heavy rain. Local waterways, particularly the Hangingstone River, have been pushed to dangerously high levels. More than 150 people voluntarily left their homes and others were told to leave. Some neighbourhoods were under boil-water advisories. Evacuees were being taken to a local sports arena and some found accommodation with family or friends.	0:45
Story 3	Protests have spread across Turkey over discontent with the country's Prime Minister. Protestors say Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been acting like a dictator, but he remains defiant in the face of popular unrest. The demonstrations began when environmentalists took to the streets to protest a plan to build army barracks and a shopping area in place of a park in central Istanbul. The police's crackdown on that demonstration, along with ongoing tensions about the Prime Minister led to the massive street protests of recent days across Turkey. Thousands have been arrested and reported hurt.	1:24

Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary

Answer	Word from the story	Related words
c	1) fired	a) avoid not listen
f	2) entire	b) extra money reward for hard work
a	3) ignore	c) dismissed forced to quit
g	4) directive	d) back pay extra payment
b	5) bonus	e) administrator manager
e	6) executive	f) all total
d	7) severance	g) instruction plan

Listening

1. Who fired the entire board of Alberta Health Services? *Alberta Health Minister Fred Horne fired the entire board of AHS.*
2. Why did he fire the entire board? *The board ignored a directive from the provincial government and gave bonuses to AHS executives.*
3. Where was this announcement made? *At a news conference in Lethbridge*
4. Why could Horne not accept the decision of AHS? *Because there have been many cuts to health care, he believed they executives should not have gotten bonuses.*
5. What will the dismissed board members not get? *They will not get severance pay.*
6. Who is (was) the chair of AHS? *Stephen Lockwood*

News story 2

Vocabulary

1. The North Saskatchewan River in Edmonton has a steep riverbank.
2. The wind and the rain will erode the cliff, making it dangerous to climb.
3. Last week we had some terrible storms in Alberta and there were tornado advisories on the radio and TV, particularly for south east Edmonton.

4. In the spring when the snow melts the roaring waterfalls in the mountains are amazing to see and hear.
5. My children voluntarily did the dishes on Father's day.
6. Because the fire was out of control the evacuees had to leave the city.
7. My children play hockey in winter and soccer in summer at the local arena.
8. Fires and floods threaten the environment as well as homes and business.

Listening

1. T The river in Fort McMurray is flooding the city.
2. F The river water has eroded the gas and phone lines.
3. T There were many days of heavy rain so a state of emergency was put into effect.
4. T Over 100 people left their homes without being asked.
5. T People in some neighbourhoods were warned not to drink their water until it's boiled.
6. F People who evacuated their homes have no place to stay.

News story 3

Vocabulary

Answer	Word	Definition
<u>g</u>	1. discontent	a) continue to be
<u>j</u>	2. dictator	b) current; in the past few days
<u>a</u>	3. remain	c) protest
<u>f</u>	4. defiant	d) huge
<u>c</u>	5. demonstration	e) unrest
<u>i</u>	6. barracks	f) resistance; not willing to change
<u>d</u>	7. massive	g) unhappiness
<u>b</u>	8. recent	h) strongly enforcing the laws
<u>e</u>	9. tension	i) houses for soldiers
<u>h</u>	10. crackdown	j) a ruler that takes total control

Listening

1. Protests have spread across Turkey over _____.	a) discontent with the country's Prime Minister b) discussions with the Prime Minister
2. Protestors say the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been _____.	a) acting like a dictator b) defiant against change
3. The demonstrations began when _____ _____ protest a building plan.	a) people wanted a shopping mall and began to b) environmentalists took to the streets to

4. The government plans to build army barracks and a shopping center _____.	a) in place of a park in central Istanbul b) in a holy place in Istanbul
5. The police cracked down on this protest, which lead to _____.	a) ongoing tensions about the Prime Minister b) massive street protests across Turkey
6. _____ have been arrested and hurt in the recent protests.	a) Thousands of people b) Hundreds of protesters

Language focus

1. "Protests **have spread** across Turkey over discontent with the country's Prime Minister."
2. "Protestors say Recep Tayyip Erdogan **has been** acting like a dictator, but he remains defiant in the face of popular unrest."
3. "Thousands **have been arrested** and reported hurt."